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WASSAIL CHORUS AT THE MERMAID TAVERN

*CHRISTMAS knows a merry, merry place,
Where he goes with fondest face,
Brightest eye, brightest hair;
Tell the Mermaid where is that one place,
Where?*

RALEIGH

*'Tis by Devon's glorious halls,
Whence, dear Ben, I come again;
Bright of golden roofs and walls—
El Dorado's rare domain—
Seem those halls when sunlight launches
Shafts of gold thro' leafless branches,
Where the winter's feathery mantle blanches
Field and farm and lane.*

DRAYTON

*'Tis where Avon's wood-sprites weave
Through the boughs a lace of rime,
While the bells of Christmas Eve
Fling for Will the Stratford-chime
O'er the river-flags emboss'd
Rich with flowery runes of frost—
O'er the meads where snowy tufts are toss'd—
Strains of olden time.*

SHAKESPEARE'S FRIEND

*'Tis, methinks, on any ground
 Where our Shakespeare's feet are set.
 There smiles Christmas, holly-crown'd
 With his blithest coronet:
 Friendship's face he loveth well:
 'Tis a countenance whose spell
 Sheds a balm o'er every mead and dell
 Where we used to fret.*

HEYWOOD

*More than all the pictures, Ben,
 Winter weaves by wood or stream,
 Christmas loves our London, when
 Rise thy clouds of wassail-steam—
 Clouds like these, that, curling, take
 Forms of faces gone, and wake
 Many a lay from lips we loved, and make
 London like a dream.*

BEN JONSON

*Love's old songs shall never die,
 Yet the new shall suffer proof:
 Love's old drink of Yule brew I
 Wassail for new love's behoof.
 Drink the drink I brew, and sing
 Till the berried branches swing,
 Till our song make all the Mermaid ring—
 Yea, from rush to roof.*

FINALE

*Christmas loves this merry, merry place;
 Christmas saith with fondest face,
 Brightest eye, brightest hair:
 'Ben, the drink tastes rare of sack and mace:
 Rare!'*

—THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.